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SHIPPING NOTES

End to sick mariners' service urged by Chamber of Shipping

By RICHARD LOW

The Canadian Chamber of Shipping has sent a letter to the Department of National Health and Welfare asking that the sick mariners' service provided under Part V of the Canada Shipping Act be discontinued.

The chamber's letter says Canada for all practical purposes no longer has a deep sea merchant marine and the only Canadians using the sick mariners' service are those in the fishing and tow boat industries. As such, the plan represents a form of medicare for a few people, it notes.

Canadian medical coverage of foreign seamen is not needed, since they are covered by other insurance plans, the chamber says. Foreign vessels are charged a duty of 2 cents for every registered ton the ship measures to pay for their share of the scheme, but the amounts they pay far exceed benefits received.

Since foreign seamen are invariably protected by their ships' owners through insurance arrangements, the Canada Shipping Act provides a form of added or dual coverage that would not be missed if, it were repealed, according to the chamber.

The Glassco royal commission on government organization also recommended discontinuance of the sick mariners' service.

Although foreign mariners generally do not benefit from the service, "the plan no longer protects the Canadian taxpayer from the burden of paying for an extended hospitalized stay in Canada by foreign seamen, as originally intended.

"On the contrary, as the Auditor-General stated in his report for 1967-68, the scheme has been operating at a loss since 1942 and by 1967-68 the total accumulated deficit had reached $8,330,415.

LAKEHEAD TRAFFIC

The Lakehead harbor at Fort William-Port Arthur handled 1,576.235 tons of cargo in July, compared with 735,212 tons in July, 1968, when operations were affected by the St. Lawrence Seaway strike until July 15 and by the Lakehead terminal strike beginning July 17.

In the first seven months of 1969, cargo totalled 5,890,737 tons, up from 5,599,515in the corresponding period a year earlier.

IRON ORE

Canadian Great Lakes ports handled an estimated 836,057 tons of iron ore in July, compared with 674,616 tons in July, 1968, according to the American Iron Ore Association of Cleveland. Volume for the first seven months of 1969 was 2,823,796 tons, down slightly from 2,882,604 a year earlier.

HULL STRAIN GAUGE

Brown Brothers and Co. Ltd. of Edinburgh says it has developed an instrument to give information on a ship's motion and the strains induced in the hull plating. The equipment reports on bow emergence frequency, hull plate deflections and bow acceleration. The system has been installed in two ships, the Manchester Courage and Manchester Concorde.

U. K. STRIKE TO END

Liverpool dockers, on strike for a week in an inter-union dispute, voted to return to work today. Assurances were given that members of the unrecognized Blue union would get certain rights and benefits previously denied them.

LAKES PILOT FEES

The federal Government will have to assume blame for the eventual end of general cargo ocean shipping on the Great Lakes, according to the Shipping Federation of Canada Inc., Montreal.

The SFC was commenting on an 8 per cent increase in Great Lakes pilotage fees that became effective Aug. 1. Virtually all ocean-going ships entering a harbor, the St. Lawrence River, the Seaway and connecting channels must take aboard a pilot familiar with local waters.

Pilotage fees have increased 56.8 per cent in the past 22 months. The federation cited the example of one pilot who made $31,306 for 8.3 months' work.

The volume of ocean shipping diminished 10.8 per cent in the first seven months of 1969, compared with the corresponding period a year earlier.

"As a result of the latest increase (in pilotage fees), there will be still further withdrawals of ocean shipping from the lakes," the SFC said in a letter to the Department of Transport.

DETROIT DOWN

The Port of Detroit handled 289,961 tons in June, bringing total tonnage since the port opened April 12 to 637,867 tons. In the corresponding period in 1968 Detroit handled 750,742 tons.

However, the Detroit-Wayne County Port Commission is optimistic that cargoes will reach the 2-million-ton mark this season.

GETTY SUPERTANKER

Getty Oil Co. of Wilmington, Del., has awarded a contract to build a supertanker of 222,000 deadweight tons to Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. of Japan. Terms were not disclosed.

Getty says the tanker will be the biggest in the company's 15-vessel fleet. The ship, capable of carrying 1,741,500 barrels of crude oil, is to be delivered in November, 1971.

THREE ORDERED

Ishikawajima - Harima Heavy Industries Co. Ltd. of Japan has received orders for three tankers of 23,800 deadweight tons each from Michail A. Karageorgis of Greece. They are scheduled for delivery in March, April and July, 1972.

HALIFAX CARGO

The Port of Halifax handled 912,138 tons of cargo in July, up from 764,352 a year earlier. Total cargo handled during the first seven months of 1969 rose to 6,272,139 tons from 5,595,000 in the corresponding period in 1968.

SAINT JOHN

Cargo handled in the Port of Saint John in July was 461,000 tons, up 76,000 tons over the volume of 385,000 in July, 1968. the National Harbors Board reports. In the first seven months of 1969, 4,055,000 tons were handled, up from 3,694,000 a year earlier.

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